

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims Status

Claims 1-18 are pending. Claims 1-9 are currently amended. Claims 10 and 12-18 are withdrawn pursuant to a previous Restriction Requirement. Claim 1 is amended to (i) recite an active method step (i.e., “laminating a shaped article with a radiation-curable laminated sheet or film”) pursuant to page 1, lines 10-12, of the specification, and (ii) limit the glass transition temperature of the binder to “below 20°C” which finds support on page 17, line 4, of the specification. Dependent claims 2-9 are amended for antecedent basis purposes as well as to improve grammar and readability. No new matter is believed to have been entered.

§112, 2nd paragraph, Rejection & §101 Rejection

Claims 1-9, namely independent claim 1, have been rejected as indefinite (under §112, 2nd paragraph) and as improper method claims (under §101) for failing to recite any active steps of the method. As noted above, claim 1 is currently amended to recite an active method step (i.e., “laminating a shaped article with a radiation-curable laminated sheet or film”). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections.

§102(b) and §103(a) Rejection over Koniger

Claims 1, 2, 5-9 and 11 are rejected as anticipated by Koniger (US 6,777,089). Claims 3 and 4 are rejected as obvious in view of Koniger. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

The claimed invention relates to a method comprising laminating a shaped article with a radiation-curable laminated sheet or film, wherein said radiation-curable laminated sheet or film comprises at least one substrate layer and a top layer, and wherein the top layer consists

of radiation-curable material which comprises a **binder** having a **glass transition temperature below 20°C** and a **content of ethylenically unsaturated groups of more than 2 mol/kg** of binder (see claim 1 - emphasis added).

In contrast to the claimed invention, Koniger discloses that the glass transition temperature of the binder used by Koniger is “**more than 40°C**, preferably more than 50°C, and with particular preference more than 60°C” (see col. 3, lines 60-63). In addition, Koniger also discloses, with respect to the binder, that the “amount of the curable groups, i.e., the ethylenically unsaturated groups, is preferably from 0.001 to 0.2 mol … per 100g of binder” which is equivalent to 0.01-2 mol/kg, or **no more than 2 mol/kg** (see col. 4, lines 1-5).

Accordingly, since Koniger discloses that the binder’s glass transition temperature is “more than 40°C” and that the binder contains “no more than 2 mol/kg” of curable groups, Koniger does **not** anticipate the claimed invention which recites the binder’s glass transition temperature as being “below 20°C” and the binder’s curable group content as being “more than 2 mol/kg.” As such, Applicants request withdrawal of the anticipation rejection over Koniger.

With respect to potential obviousness over Koniger, Applicants submit that the claimed invention is not rendered obvious by Koniger for at least the foregoing reasons. In addition, Applicants note the following. Not only does Koniger fail to disclose the claimed glass transition temperature of the binder and the curable groups content of the binder, but Koniger suggests glass transition temperatures and curable groups contents of the binder that are preferably *further removed* from those claimed.

For example, Koniger discloses that the glass transition temperature of the binder preferably *increase* from more than 40°C to more than 50°C to more than 60°C (see col. 3, lines 60-63), and that the curable groups content of the binder preferably *decrease* from 0.001-0.2 mol/100g to 0.005-0.15 mol/100g to 0.01-0.1 mol/100g (see col. 4, lines 1-5).

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These suggestions by Koniger (i.e., *increased* glass transition temperatures (i.e., 40°C to 50°C to 60°C) and *decreased* curable groups content of the binder (i.e., 0.01-2 mol/kg to 0.05-1.5 mol/kg to 0.1-1 mol/kg) are in stark contrast to the claimed invention's *decreased* glass transition temperature (i.e., 20°C) and *increased* curable groups content of the claimed binder (i.e., > 2 mol/kg).

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Koniger, in addition to failing to disclose these features of the claimed binder, also fails to suggest these features of the claimed binder. As such, Applicants submit that Koniger does not render obvious the claimed invention. Thus, Applicants request withdrawal of the obviousness rejection in view of Koniger.

Conclusion

For the reasons discussed above, Applicants submit that all now-pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejections and passage of this case to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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